



# *Red Seas, White Sands, Blue Skies*

**January - March 2017**

*An American Citizen Services Newsletter*

## **How to Reach Us**

**The U.S. Embassy is located in the Diplomatic Quarter, in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.**

**American Citizen Services Public hours:**

Sunday through Thursday,  
1:00pm-3:00pm

**Email:** RiyadhACS@state.gov

**Phone:** (966)(11)488-3800

**U.S. Consulate Jeddah**

**American Citizen Services Public hours:**

Sunday through Thursday,  
1:00-3:00pm

**Email:** JeddahACS@state.gov

**Phone:** (966)(12)667-0080

**U.S. Consulate Dhahran**

**American Citizen Services Public hours:**

Sunday through Thursday,  
1:00-3:30 pm

**Email:** DhahranACS@state.gov

**Phone:** (966)(13)330-3200

Need to make an appointment? Please visit [our website!](#)

## **Letter from Riyadh's ACS Chief**

Happy New Year and welcome to our first issue of the ACS newsletter for 2017! I think you'll find this issue packed with useful and interesting information ranging from minor changes in the passport application procedure to our Kids Corner article reminding us about the struggles that Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. endured in his fight for civil rights.

January 20<sup>th</sup> brings the inauguration of our 45<sup>th</sup> President and with it the excitement and uncertainties that every new Presidential administration brings. We have heard questions from many of you regarding what kinds of practical changes the new Administration will mean to the Embassy. While we all await the appointment of a new Ambassador, please rest assured that everyone at the U.S. Mission in Saudi Arabia is here to carry out the foreign policy of the United States, and our consular teams in Riyadh, Jeddah and Dhahran will continue to serve American Citizens here in the Kingdom.

On another exciting note, as promised in our last newsletter, ACS has started to host events and conduct outreach to our American Citizen community (page 3). We'll be continuing to visit housing compounds and organizations in Riyadh over the next quarter. If you have suggestions for outreach events or locations, please contact [riyadhacs@state.gov](mailto:riyadhacs@state.gov).

Best wishes for 2017!

*Jason*

## **Farewell to Ambassador Westphal**



**Dr. Joseph W. Westphal**

U.S. Ambassador to Saudi Arabia March, 2014 - January, 2017

The U.S. Embassy and Consulates in Saudi Arabia say goodbye to Ambassador Westphal in January 2017. You can view his farewell video on the [U.S. Embassy & Consulates in Saudi Arabia](#) website.



## 2017 PRESIDENTIAL INAUGURATION

**"I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States."**

With those words, the President-elect will take the oath of office on January 20, 2017, to formally become the 45th President of the United States. Visit the [Presidential Inaugural Committee's website](#) to live stream the event starting at 9:30 AM EST.

The theme of the 58th Presidential Inauguration, "Uniquely American," recognizes the symbolic importance of Friday's event. We may consider it routine, but the inaugural ceremony remains a uniquely American expression of our constitutional system. The peaceful transition between presidential administrations signals that we are united as a people behind an enduring republic.

In 1981 the inaugural ceremony struck President Ronald Reagan as being both commonplace and miraculous. "The orderly transfer of authority as called for in the Constitution routinely takes place, as it has for almost two centuries, and few of us stop to think how unique we really are," he said in his address. "In the eyes of many in the world, this every-four-year ceremony we accept as normal is nothing less than a miracle."

With each inauguration we embrace this uniquely American ceremony, seeing in this extraordinary ritual a reflection of the nation itself. In times of peace or war, of prosperity or crisis, inaugurations strengthen the national resolve to meet each new challenge.

On January 20, 2017, we gather at the U.S. Capitol, the home of the legislature, along with the executive, represented by the President, and the judiciary, embodied by the Chief Justice of the United States who administers the oath. It is a meeting of the three branches of the federal government, before the people, to observe the simple yet momentous ritual of presidential oath taking.

On Friday, "We, the People" reaffirm a uniquely American foundation in popular sovereignty, while recommitting ourselves to the pursuit of "a more perfect union."

### Presidential Inaugural History Facts

Did you know that the first President of the United States, George Washington, delivered the shortest inaugural address at 135 words? Or that William McKinley's 1901 inauguration was the first one to be filmed?

For more inauguration facts, visit:  
<https://www.usa.gov/inauguration-2017>



## U.S. Embassy Riyadh Election Results Breakfast

On the morning of November 9th, the American Citizen Services Unit in Riyadh hosted a U.S. Presidential Election Results breakfast at the Embassy. U.S. citizens from the area were invited to celebrate the election of our 45th President. Attendees and U.S. Embassy employees watched live news coverage as the votes rolled in — all while partaking in a traditional American-style breakfast buffet.



## IRS Change to the ITIN Program

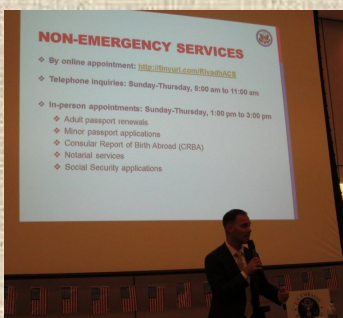
The IRS is implementing significant changes made to the Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) program under the [PATH Act of 2015](#). The new law means that any ITIN not used on a federal tax return at least once in the last three years will no longer be valid as of January 1, 2017 for use on a tax return unless the taxpayer renews the ITIN. In addition, all ITINs issued prior to 2013 will begin to expire this year and taxpayers will need to renew them.

The first pre-2013 ITINs that will expire are those with middle digits of 78 and 79 (Example: 9XX-78-XXXX). The renewal period for these ITINs began October 1, 2016. The IRS began to mail letters to this group of taxpayers in August to inform them of the need to renew their ITINs in order to file a tax return, and explain the renewal steps. The IRS will announce the schedule for expiration and renewal of ITINs that do not have middle digits of 78 and 79 at a future date.

If taxpayers have an expired ITIN, not renewed before filing a tax return next year, they might face a refund delay and be ineligible for certain tax credits, such as the Child Tax Credit and the American Opportunity Tax Credit, until they renew the ITIN. More information is available on the [ITIN page at IRS.gov](#).

## Outreach to U.S. Citizens in Riyadh

The American Citizen Services (ACS) Unit in Riyadh hosted a town hall for U.S. citizens at Al Bustan compound on the evening of November 28th. Consular services such as passport renewals and notarial services were offered during the first hour of the event. To kick off the presentations, Special Agent Robert Cline from the U.S. Embassy's security office discussed the current security situation in Saudi Arabia and recommended safety measures for U.S. citizens living overseas. ACS Chief Jason Chiodi then gave an overview of the ACS Unit and discussed the services we can provide for U.S. citizens. Despite the torrential downpour during the evening, turnout for the event was encouraging. The ACS Unit plans to host similar events throughout Riyadh in the upcoming year.





## Information for Taxpayers Living Abroad

If you are a U.S. citizen or resident alien, the rules for filing income, estate, and gift tax returns and paying estimated tax are generally the same whether you are in the United States or abroad. Your worldwide income is subject to U.S. income tax, regardless of where you reside.

### When to File

If you are a [U.S. citizen](#) or [resident alien](#) residing overseas, or are in the military on duty outside the U.S., on the regular due date of your return, you are allowed an automatic 2-month extension to file your return without requesting an extension. For a calendar year return, the automatic 2-month extension is to **June 15**. Note that you must pay any tax due by April 15 or interest will be charged starting from April 15.

### Where to File

If you are a U.S. citizen or resident alien (Green Card Holder) and you live in a foreign country, mail your U.S. tax return to:

Department of the Treasury  
Internal Revenue Service Center  
Austin, TX 73301-0215  
USA

Estimated tax payments should be mailed with form 1040-ES to:

Internal Revenue Service  
P.O. Box 1300  
Charlotte, NC 28201-1300  
USA

Taxpayers with an AGI (Adjusted Gross Income) within a specified threshold can electronically file their tax return for free using [freefile](#). Taxpayers with an AGI greater than the specified threshold can either use the [Free File Fillable Forms](#) or [efile by purchasing commercial software](#). A limited number of companies provide software that can accommodate foreign addresses. To determine which will work best for you, view the complete [Free File Software list](#) and the services provided.

### Taxpayer Identification Number

Each taxpayer who files, or is claimed as a dependent on, a U.S. tax return will need a social security number (SSN) or individual taxpayer identification number (ITIN). To obtain a SSN, use form SS-5, Application for a Social Security Card. To get form SS-5, or to find out if you are eligible for a social security card, contact a Social Security Office or visit [Social Security International Operations](#). If you, or your spouse, are not eligible for a SSN, you can obtain an [ITIN](#) by filing form W-7 along with appropriate documentation.

### Exchange Rates

You must express the amounts you report on your U.S. tax return in U.S. dollars. If you receive all or part of your income or pay some or all of your expenses in foreign currency, you must translate the foreign currency into U.S. dollars. Taxpayers generally use the yearly average exchange rate to report foreign-earned income that was received regularly throughout the year. However, if you had foreign transactions on specific days, you may also use the exchange rates for those days. Exchange rates can be found at [Foreign Currency and Currency Exchange Rates](#). Yearly average currency exchange rates for most countries can be found at [Yearly Average Currency Exchange Rates](#).

### How to Get Tax Help

The IRS Office in Philadelphia provides international tax assistance. This office is open Monday through Friday from 6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. EST and can be contacted by:

- Phone: 1 (267) 941-1000 (not toll-free)
- FAX: 1 (267) 941-1055
- Email: [Email the IRS](#)  
(e-mail is for general tax questions; NOT questions regarding your tax account)
- Mail: Internal Revenue Service  
Philadelphia, Pa 19255-0725

Taxpayer service, formerly offered at the foreign posts of duty, is no longer available. See [Contact My Local Office Internationally](#) for more details on international services.

### Help with Unresolved Tax Problems

If you are experiencing a tax problem that is causing you economic harm or has not been resolved through normal channels, you can [contact the Taxpayer Advocate](#).



For more information, visit the Internal Revenue Services (IRS) website:  
<https://www.irs.gov/>

# MERS

## Be an Informed Traveler

**M**ERS (Middle East Respiratory Syndrome) is a viral respiratory illness first reported in Saudi Arabia in 2012. It is caused by a virus that is different from any other virus that has been previously found in people. Symptoms of MERS include fever, cough, and shortness of breath.

Cases of MERS have been identified in multiple countries in the Arabian Peninsula. There have also been cases in several other countries in travelers who have been to the Arabian Peninsula and, in some instances, their close contacts. Two cases were confirmed in May 2014 among two health care workers living in Saudi Arabia who were visiting the United States.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) does not recommend that travelers change their plans because of MERS. Most instances of person-to-person spread have occurred in health care workers and other close contacts (such as family members and caregivers) of people sick with MERS. If you are concerned about MERS, you should discuss your travel plans with your doctor.

For additional information about MERS, including travel advisories, visit the [CDC website](http://www.cdc.gov).

## Exposure to Camels

The MERS virus has been found in some camels, and some MERS patients have reported contact with camels. However, we do not know exactly how people become infected with the virus—many people with MERS have had close contact with a person sick with MERS.

The World Health Organization has posted a general precaution for anyone visiting farms, markets, barns, or other places where animals are present. Travelers should practice general hygiene measures, including regular handwashing before and after touching animals, and avoid contact with sick animals. Travelers should also avoid consumption of raw or undercooked animal products.

The World Health Organization considers certain groups to be at high risk for severe MERS; these groups include people with diabetes, kidney failure, or chronic lung disease and people who have weakened immune systems. The World Health Organization recommends that these groups take additional precautions:

- Avoid contact with camels.
- Do not drink raw camel milk or raw camel urine.
- Do not eat undercooked meat, particularly camel meat.

Countries in or near the Arabian Peninsula



## What can travelers do to prevent MERS?

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds, and help young children do the same. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands. Germs spread this way.
- Avoid personal contact, such as kissing, or sharing cups or eating utensils, with sick people.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects, such as doorknobs.
- Be sure you are up-to-date with all of your shots, and if possible, see your health care provider at least 4–6 weeks before travel to get any additional shots.
- Visit CDC's [Travelers' Health](http://www.cdc.gov/travel) website for more information on healthy travel.

## Q: What if I recently traveled to the Arabian Peninsula or neighboring countries and got sick?

**A:** If you develop a fever and symptoms of respiratory illness, such as cough or shortness of breath, within 14 days after traveling from countries in or near the Arabian Peninsula, you should call ahead to a healthcare provider and mention your recent travel. Until your healthcare provider says it's okay, stay home from work or school and delay future travel to reduce the possibility of spreading illness to others.





## Construction Award for the New U.S. Consulate General in Dhahran

The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations (OBO) has announced that Caddell Construction Co. of Montgomery, Alabama, was awarded the construction contract for the new U.S. Consulate General project in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia.

The multi-building complex will be situated on a 10.5-acre site in the city of Al Khobar, and will include a Consulate office building, a Consul General's Residence, a Marine Security Guard Residence, support buildings, and facilities for the Consulate community. The new complex will provide Consulate employees with a safe, secure, sustainable, and modern workplace. Construction will commence in 2017 and project completion is anticipated in 2020.

The architect is Skidmore, Owings & Merrill LLP of San Francisco, California.

OBO's mission is to provide safe, secure, and functional facilities that represent the U.S. government to the host nation and support our staff in the achievement of U.S. foreign policy objectives. These facilities represent American values and the best in American architecture, engineering, technology, sustainability, art, culture, and construction execution.

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## Interested in Joining the U.S. Department of State as a Foreign Service Officer?

U.S. Embassy Riyadh will be hosting the Foreign Service Officer Test (FSOT) on Wednesday, February 1, 2017. Test [Registration](#) opens December 15, 2016 and closes January 25, 2017.

### Eligibility Requirements:

- All applicants must be U.S. citizens on the date they submit their registration package.
- On the day you submit your registration, you must be at least 20 years old and no older than 59 years of age.
- On the day you are appointed as a Foreign Service Officer, you must be at least 21 years old, and not yet 60.
- You must also be available for worldwide assignments, including Washington, D.C.

The Foreign Service Officer Test (FSOT) is an important part of the FSO selection process, covering the job knowledge, English expression and biographic information necessary to work as a Foreign Service Officer. For study guides and more information on the Foreign Service and other State Department careers, visit <https://careers.state.gov/>. If you have specific questions about the Foreign Service Officer Test you may send them to [FSOTQuestions@state.gov](mailto:FSOTQuestions@state.gov).

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## Passport Questions? We've Got Answers!

### Q: How do I report a lost or stolen U.S. passport?

**A:** Report your passport lost or stolen immediately to protect yourself from identity theft. You can replace it now or later - it's up to you! **Once you report a passport lost or stolen, it is invalid and cannot be used for international travel.** Report your passport lost or stolen by using one of the 3 options below:

- 1) **Online:**  
Click on the tool to the right, and navigate to the "Report Lost or Stolen" tab.
- 2) **Phone:**  
Call us toll-free at 1-877-487-2778 (TTY 1-888-874-7793).
- 3) **Mail:**  
Complete, sign, and mail Form DS-64 to the address on the form.



If your passport is lost or stolen while overseas, [contact your nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate](#) for information about how to replace it.

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### Q: Do I have to provide my Social Security number on my passport application?

**A:** Yes. You must provide your Social Security number, if you have been issued one, on your application for a U.S. passport, in accordance with [22 U.S.C. 2714a](#) and [22 C.F.R 51.60\(f\)](#).

If you or your child does not have a Social Security number, you must submit a statement, signed and dated, that includes the phrase, "I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States of America that the following is true and correct: I have/(Child's full name) has never been issued a Social Security number by the Social Security Administration."

Your passport application will be delayed or denied if you do not provide a Social Security number or a statement declaring that a Social Security number has not been issued to you. Contact the [Social Security Administration](#) or your [nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate](#) for information about obtaining a new or replacement Social Security number and card.

If you are outside the United States and have an emergency need to travel, but you cannot locate your Social Security number, we may be able to issue you a limited passport for direct return to the United States only.

If you fail to provide the information, you will also be subject to a \$500 penalty enforced by the IRS pursuant to Section 6039E of the Internal Revenue Code ([26 U.S.C. 6039E](#)). All questions on this matter should be directed to the nearest IRS office.

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## Picture-Perfect Passport

Bad photos are the #1 reason passport applications get held up during the application process. Submitting a passport application with a bad photo will delay processing your application and could interfere with planned travel. See the most common passport photo mistakes below:



### Over exposed or under exposed

Photos that are too bright or that show shadows on your face will also cause you problems. Your photo needs to be clear, reflecting your true skin tone.

### Photo is not recent

Your passport photo needs to have been taken within 6 months of submitting your passport photo.

### Image size

Photos must be 2 inches by 2 inches. Photos that are taken too close or too far away will be rejected. For help, use the State Department's [smart photo tool](#).

### Low quality image or paper

Photo is blurry, grainy, pixelated, or printed on the wrong paper. Photos should be high resolution and not damaged.

## How to Replace Your Vital Records

Have you lost or misplaced any of your vital records? See the information below about how to replace your important documents:

- **State-issued Identification:** If your driver's license or state-issued identification (ID) card was recently lost or stolen, contact your [state motor vehicle agency](#).
- **U.S. Passport:** See page 7.
- **Social Security Cards:** If your social security card was lost or stolen, you may be able to [request a replacement social security card](#) directly from the Social Security Administration (SSA). You can also [contact your nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate](#) for assistance.
- **Medicare ID Cards:** The SSA can also help you [replace a lost or stolen Medicare card](#).
- **Medicaid ID Cards:** To replace a lost or stolen Medicaid card, please [contact your state Medicaid Office](#).
- **Birth Certificates If You Were Born in the U.S.:** For a certified copy of your birth certificate, contact the [vital records office](#) in the state where you were born for instructions on how to request a copy and information on any fees. If you need to get a copy of your birth certificate quickly, ask the vital records office at the time you place your order about getting expedited service or shipping.
- **Birth Certificates If You Were Born Abroad:** If you received a Consular Report of Birth Abroad issued by an Embassy or Consulate overseas, you can [get a copy of this report](#) from the U.S. Department of State.



## Embassy/Consulate Closures

The Embassy/Consulate will be closed for the following holidays:

- Sunday, February 19th, in observance of Washington's Birthday
- Sunday, May 28th, in observance of Memorial Day
- Sunday, June 25th—Thursday, June 29th, Eid-al-Fitr/Ramadan

## Let's Stay in Touch!

- ◆ Find us online at:  
<https://sa.usembassy.gov/u-s-citizen-services/>
- ◆ Follow us on twitter **@KSA\_ACS**.

## Are You Traveling Soon?

A trip requires careful planning. Here are some important steps to prepare for a safe trip outside the United States.

- The [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#) is a free service that allows U.S. citizens traveling or living abroad to enroll with the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate. Enroll online now!
- [Read up on your destination](#) at [travel.state.gov](https://travel.state.gov). Learn about visa requirements, local laws, customs, and medical care in the countries you are visiting. Some travelers, such as those with [disabilities](#), [women](#), and [LGBTI persons](#), may face additional challenges when abroad.
- Be aware of any [Travel Warnings or Travel Alerts](#) for your destination country, which describe risks to you and may affect your travel plans. Also check the website of the [U.S. embassy or consulate](#) where you will be traveling for the latest security messages.
- Find out about health precautions. The [U.S. Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#) and the [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#) provide recommendations for vaccinations and other travel health precautions for your trip abroad.
- Prepare to handle money overseas. Before you go, notify your bank and credit card company of your travel, and check exchange rates. For information about using cash, debit/credit cards, and ATMs, [read about your destination](#).
- Carry contact details for the nearest [U.S. embassy or U.S. consulate](#) with you, in English and the local language. We provide help for emergencies 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, overseas and in Washington, D.C. (888-407-4747 or 202-501-4444). Read more about [what the Department of State can and cannot do for you in an emergency](#).



## Martin Luther King, Jr's Birthday

**January 16, 2017**

Civil Rights Leader Martin Luther King Jr. was born January 15, 1929. Martin Luther King Jr. was the most important voice of the American civil rights movement, which worked for equal rights for all. He was famous for using nonviolent resistance to overcome injustice, and he never got tired of trying to end segregation laws (laws that prevented blacks from entering certain places, such as restaurants, hotels, and public schools). He also did all he could to make people realize that "all men are created equal." In 1963, King participated in the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. From the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, he delivered his famous "I Have A Dream" speech to a crowd of 250,000. You've probably heard some of this powerful speech. It emphasized King's belief that the movement would create a society in which character, rather than color, prevailed. For his efforts, Martin Luther King was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964. Tragically, King was assassinated in 1968, but his ideals live on and his words continue to inspire. His birthday is now observed as a national holiday on the third Monday in January. Do you think America has come any closer to creating the society that King envisioned?

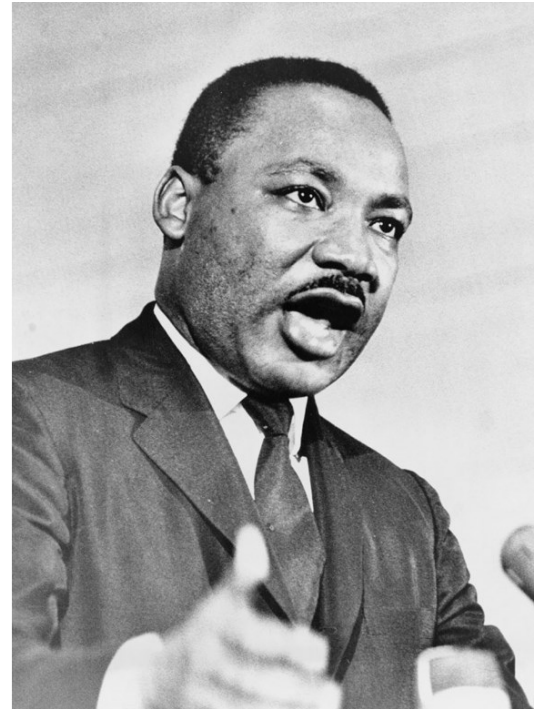


Photo Credit: "[Rev. Martin Luther King, head-and-shoulders portrait, facing right, speaking at a rally in Crawfordville, Georgia]." United Press International telephoto, 1965 Oct 11. Prints and Photographs Division of the Library of Congress.

Article Credit: Library of Congress: [www.loc.gov](http://www.loc.gov)

Draw a line to match each country to its flag.

- |  |                      |
|--|----------------------|
| 1.  | United Kingdom, U.K. |
| 2.  | Germany              |
| 3.  | Australia            |
| 4.  | Japan                |
| 5.  | Canada               |
| 6.  | Sweden               |
| 7.  | India                |

**Test Your  
Geography  
Skills!**



Unscramble the words below to find the 7 continents.

1. SIAA \_\_\_\_\_
2. CARIFA \_\_\_\_\_
3. THRON RIACMAE \_\_\_\_\_
4. UTOSH ACEMIRA \_\_\_\_\_
5. TRCANICATA \_\_\_\_\_
6. PERUEO \_\_\_\_\_
7. ARTALSUIA \_\_\_\_\_

Answers: 1. Japan 2. Canada 3. United Kingdom 4. India 5. Sweden 6. Germany 7. Australia

Answers: 1. Asia 2. Africa 3. North America 4. South America 5. Antarctica 6. Europe 7. Australia

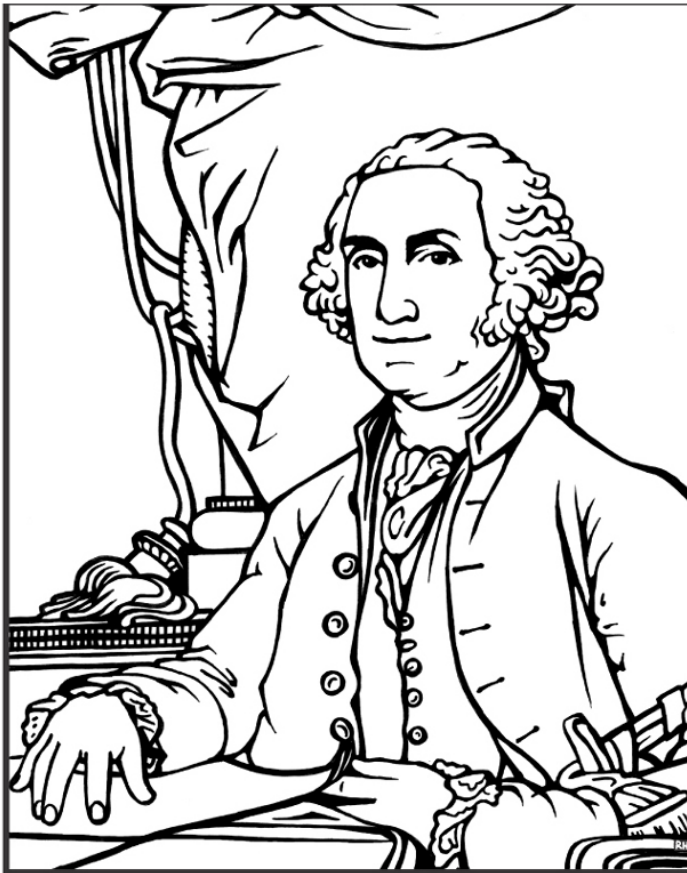
## Presidents' Day—Washington's Birthday

**February 20, 2017**

The history of Presidents' Day can be traced back to the late 1700s. People began celebrating George Washington's birthday (February 22) while he was still president. About a hundred years later, his birthday became a federal holiday. Meanwhile, many people celebrated Abraham Lincoln's birthday, February 12, in the year of his assassination (1865) and afterward, though Lincoln's birthday never became a federal holiday.

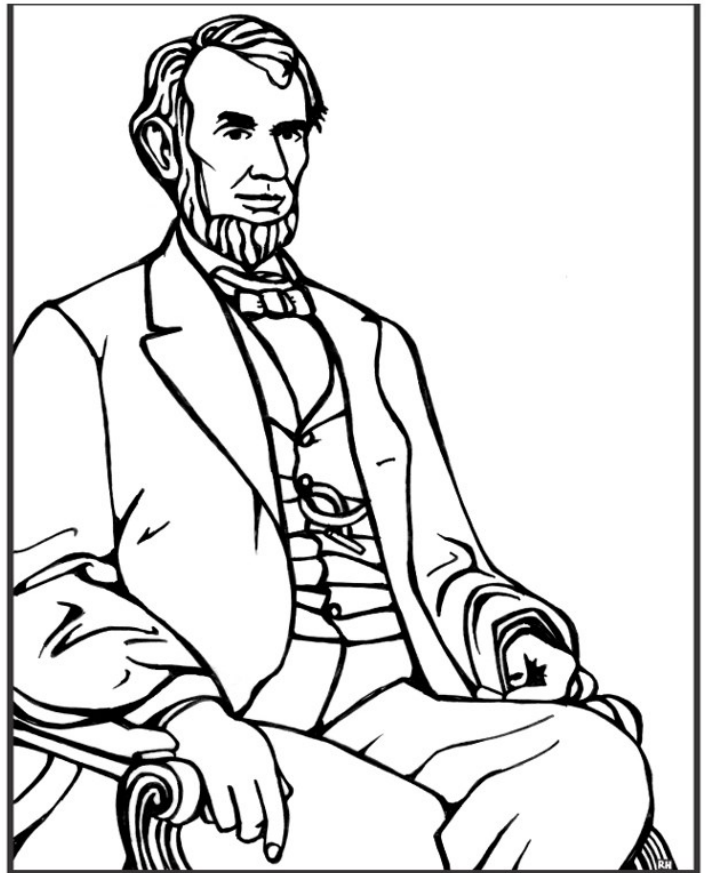
Both Washington and Lincoln were great presidents. Washington helped to hold the country together during the Revolutionary War, and Lincoln, to bring it back together after the Civil War. But all of our presidents have served our country and worked to make our lives better.

Since the passage of the Monday Holidays Act, Washington's birthday has been celebrated on the third Monday in February. President Nixon called the holiday "Presidents' Day" to honor all past presidents. Many states and people have followed his example, though "Washington's Birthday" is still the holiday's legal name for the federal government. But under any name, it's a great day to celebrate everything that our past presidents, including Washington and Lincoln, have done for our nation.



1. George Washington 1789–1797

[www.whitehousekids.gov](http://www.whitehousekids.gov)



16. Abraham Lincoln 1861–1865

[www.whitehousekids.gov](http://www.whitehousekids.gov)